

Developing Countries

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I. Scope

This Collection Policy Statement is based on the third of the Library's three "canons of Selection": "the Library should possess in some useful form, the records of other societies, past and present, and should accumulate, in original or in copy, full and representative collections of the written records of those societies and peoples whose experience is of most immediate concern to the people of the United States."

The World Bank and the United Nations use different terminology to define "developing countries," also known as "less-developed countries." The latter organization also uses "least developed countries," "small island developing states," and "landlocked developing countries." The World Bank's main criteria for classifying economies is gross national income (GNI) per capita, previously referred to as gross national product, or GNP. The United Nations has stated that: "There is no commonly agreed definition of developing countries."

In the United Nations and World Bank lists, the number of developing countries ranges from 104 to 152. The 2008 List of Developing Countries compiled by the World Bank has 152 countries. The World Bank also includes five high-income developing economies - because of their economic structure or the official opinion of their governments, as well as several countries with transition economies - based on their low or middle levels of per capital income.

For this Collections Policy Statement, the Library considers a developing country one in which:

The majority of population makes far less income, and has significantly weaker social indicators, than the population in high-income countries...[and] lives on far less money-and often lacks basic public services-than the population in highly-industrialized countries.¹

The Library is encouraged to collect materials on developing countries - most specifically democratic developments - to include that of opposition groups and political parties. The Congressional Research Service is particularly interested in materials of the latter categories. Materials are collected in all

¹ The World Bank. FAQs: About Development.

formats - in print (reference works, monographs, and serials), microform, or electronic (databases, web sites, and electronic serials) formats.

There is no single LC classification number for developing countries. Materials for a specific country would normally be classified in the D's for politics and history, J's for political science, P's for (its) literature and language, and K's for law.

II. Research Strengths

The Library systematically began to acquire foreign imprints after World War II. Through agents, dealers, and acquisitions trips by LC staff, and the operations of the Overseas Offices, the Library has acquired a truly universal collection, one that supports studies of all cultures. In some cases, the Library's collection has been used to supplement research materials no longer available in some of the developing countries. Many of these materials, published outside the United States, are in a foreign language.

The Library collects less selectively for works published in developing countries in language and literature materials (see the Literature and Language Collections Policy Statement). Unless otherwise stated, the Library collects non-English language and literature at the "Research Level" (Level 4); popular literature at the "Instructional Level" (Level 3) and textbooks and grammars at the "Basic Level" (Level 2).

III. Collecting Policy

It is understood that a high degree of judgment will be exercised in making selections for the permanent collections from among the materials acquired.

The Library has a myriad number of titles housed in the general classified collections about developing countries in general. Special strengths include materials on specific countries which are held in the "area studies" collections.

It also is important to recognize the role of copyright deposits and the Cataloging in Publication program in building the collection of general reference works published within the United States. There also should be increased emphasis on collecting the works of mainstream publishing within developing countries to the best extent possible.

The Library's collections covering developing countries benefit greatly from the efforts of the Library's Overseas Offices (Cairo, Islamabad, Jakarta, Nairobi, New Delhi, and Rio de Janeiro), which are in an exceptional position to acquire, catalog, preserve, and distribute collections materials from developing countries. Uniquely qualified by location and staff, and guided by Collections Policy Statements, the offices acquire newly published books and monographs (reference works) as well as revised editions of earlier works on all subjects. Formats also include serials, newspapers, journals, official gazettes, pamphlets, maps, posters, compact discs, musical scores, sound and video recordings, and electronic media. Furthermore, where such materials may be essentially unavailable through traditional acquisitions methods, the Overseas Offices also are in a prime position to help to enrich the Library's collections by offering recommendations for internet resources - including government web sites, digital newspapers, or newspaper-like e-publications, blogs, political party Web sites, and so on - for web capture to become part of the Library's collections.

The level of collecting for the subject or format as described in the appropriate Collections Policy Statement (CPS) normally should be followed when collecting materials from developing countries. As developing countries would not necessarily have publishers' catalogs, national bibliographies, vendor-supplied title slips, professional literature for reviews, or even national library catalogs or bibliographic databases, this task is made more difficult. Nonetheless, in certain areas, either the areas of expanded coverage listed below or in the judgment of the Library's recommending officers, the Library should interpret policies broadly in order to insure appropriate coverage. Areas of expanded coverage include:

- Dissertations: The Dissertations and Theses Collections Policy Statement states that "current foreign dissertations are acquired on a highly selective basis, with special consideration given to the fields of law, library science, music, and the history, government, and literature of the United States." Dissertations and theses from universities in developing countries, on subjects in which the Library collects comprehensively (Level 5), should be acquired.
- Ephemera: The Ephemera Collections Policy Statement calls for the Library "to obtain ephemera when such materials contain important information on current developments or provide a perspective on issues which are of importance and of particular interest to Congress, Federal agencies, academic institutions, or researchers of the Library of Congress, and which may not be readily available through mainstream publishing. Emphasis will be placed on materials of contemporary interest which provide unique testimony of the social, cultural, economic and political events frequently under-represented in mainstream book format. In determining whether ephemera acquired for the Library's current needs are ultimately to be retained for the permanent collections, special consideration will be given to the interests of the Prints and Photographs Division, Rare Book and Special Collections Division or other custodial divisions in granting custody or determining the disposition of a collection."
- Literature: The Literature and Language Collections Policy Statement refers to "works in the forms of fiction, poetry, drama, the general essay, oratory, and journalism, as well as the historical, theoretical, critical, biographical, and scholarly studies dealing with such works. The field of language includes general works on language as a phenomenon and works on particular languages, including dictionaries, grammars, rhetorics, and histories. The fields of literature and language are covered in a wide variety of formats in the Library of Congress, including traditional printed books and periodicals, books and periodicals issued with CDs or in other multimedia formats, manuscripts, microforms, electronic sources (databases, digitized materials, and born digital resources), audio recordings, motion pictures, and photographs."
- Official Publications: The Library acquires government documents from all regions, countries, and parts of the world in all languages, and in all available and appropriate formats. Official publications as they relate to developing countries are addressed in the Government Publications - Foreign Collections Policy Statement. Because government publications can relate to any subject, individual subject, and format, collections policies should be consulted for added guidance. For purposes of maintaining a research level collection, the Library of Congress gives high priority to the acquisition of government publications at the national level from all countries of the world. Those publications considered to be of lasting research value are added to the Library's permanent collections and include, but are not limited to, codes, gazettes, and other statutory and regulatory materials, legislative and judicial publications, administrative reports, and publications containing statistical, demographic, socioeconomic, and scientific data.

The Library acquires publications of provinces, states, and regions in countries where such subdivisions have a high degree of autonomy and issue publications containing a substantial amount of information which is not available in publications at the national level. The publications to be acquired include official gazettes and other substantial legal, regulatory, and judicial publications, which are required by the Law Library, legislative material, statistics, including census publications, major administrative reports, and scientific data. Other publications of governments at the provincial or regional level may be acquired selectively, based on their subject content and research value and needs of the Congress. In general, the Library limits its major acquisitions efforts to official publications of the capital cities. The official publications of one or more other important cities in addition to the capital may be regularly acquired if the city plays an important national or regional role and publishes information not available elsewhere.

Additional municipal publications may be acquired on a title-by-title basis, and are selected for their content and research value to the Library.

In recognition of the extreme difficulties which the Library experiences in obtaining publications from developing countries of the world, a more liberal approach to the acquisition of city materials is followed. It is understood that a high degree of judgment will be exercised in making selections for the permanent collections from among the materials acquired.

- Textbooks: The guidelines provided under the Education Collections Policy Statement should be followed. The collection of foreign textbooks is limited to Level 2 for university-level texts and Level 1 for elementary- and secondary-level textbooks.
- Electronic Resources: The Web Archiving Supplementary Guideline should be followed. Examples of electronic resources include, but are not limited to web sites, online databases (subscription databases in particular), e-journals, e-books, electronic integrating resources, CD-ROMs, and DVD-ROMs, whether free or fee-based, required to support research in the subject covered.

Particular emphasis should be paid to materials of contemporary interest which provide unique testimony of the social, cultural, and political issues under-represented in mainstream publishing. Electronic resources should include digital newspapers, especially from those developing countries where digital publishing is an alternative to a government-controlled press. As part of the collection/coverage of electronic resources, consider also the role of the vanity press or self-published material as well as to archiving the following: government documents, government departmental databases, quasi-governmental web sites, museum exhibitions, electioneering and campaign literature, and online opposition materials.

The following databases may be helpful in this regard:

- *SciDev.Net* - a nonprofit dedicated to providing reliable and authoritative information about science and technology for the developing world, has a searchable book review section which may yield information and materials
- *Human Development Reports* (UNDP) - a rich resource for material on developing countries
- *Information Technology Landscape in Nations around the World* - for its database of reports

on more than 80 nations (developing and developed) as well as white papers on special information and communication technologies topics

- Selected sound recordings and videotapes provide a snapshot of cultural and political events and activities which offer a research opportunity into current events of analytical interest of scholars and possibly the Congress. These resources should include taped and transcribed interviews, and audio and video accounts of oral tradition.
- Miscellaneous: Aside from the country itself, the United States government, or international governing bodies, materials also should be collected from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research centers, and humanitarian aid organizations.

Exchange agreements are an important source for acquisition of materials on developing countries. These agreements have enabled the Library to supplement its holdings with wide-ranging foreign-language acquisitions representing a variety of subjects and languages, dispersed throughout the Library from the various "area studies" divisions to the general collections.

IV. Acquisition Sources: Current and Future

The developing countries collection relies on the efforts of agents, dealers, and Library staff on acquisitions trips, as well as the operations of the Overseas Offices. Some of these countries have political movements that are developing web sites, which will likely be a source of future acquisitions.

Electronic materials, both in forms analogous to print materials and in forms unique to new technologies, parallel the contents of these areas. Electronic networks (vs. databases) are a useful tool for searching for information on developing countries.

The Library should collect digital newspapers, especially from developing countries where digital publishing serves as an alternative to government-controlled press, or in those countries where a fledgling publishing industry has developed via the web, as an alternative to the high cost of paper and distribution. The Library also should collect web versions of foreign government publications. Much of this material is ephemeral/grey matter and not likely to be in print.

V. Collecting Levels

The Library collects comprehensively (Level 5) current reference works, monographs, serials, and textbooks on developing countries regardless of format, including electronic materials whether initially networked (as through the internet) or in stand-alone form, commensurate with the content areas of these types of print materials. Microform collections are not available in electronic format and are not comprehensively collected.

The Library also collects comprehensively (Level 5) current works on developing countries that exist only in electronic format by exploiting new technologies for historical research and teaching. These include (but are not limited to) web portals, online scholarly discussion fora, serials and databases published only in electronic form, and other such resources, all of which are increasingly integral to the practice of historical scholarship. (For some guidelines pertinent to the collection of materials from the internet, see the Web Archiving Supplementary Guideline.)

Doctoral dissertations accepted by universities in the United States, preferably in microform or digital format, are collected comprehensively by the Library; special consideration is given to acquiring foreign dissertations relating to developing countries. Theses are not acquired unless they make an original contribution to knowledge. (See the Dissertations and Theses Collections Policy Statement.)

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